

§ 297.303 Applicability of amendment provisions.

(a) The amendment procedures are not intended to allow a challenge to material that records an event that actually occurred nor are they designed to permit a collateral attack upon that which has been or could have been the subject of a judicial, quasi-judicial, or administrative proceeding. The amendment procedures are also not designed to change opinions in records pertaining to the individual.

(b) The amendment procedures apply to situations when an occurrence that is documented was challenged through an established judicial, quasi-judicial, or administrative procedure and found to be inaccurately described; when the document is not identical to the individual's copy; or when the document is not created in accordance with the applicable recordkeeping requirements. (For example, the amendment provisions are not designed to allow a challenge to the merits of an agency adverse action that is documented in an individual's Official Personnel Folder.)

§ 297.304 Approval of requests to amend records.

(a) If the system manager determines that amendment of a record is appropriate, the system manager will take the necessary steps to have the necessary changes made and will see that the individual receives a copy of the amended record.

(b) When practicable and appropriate, the system manager will advise all prior recipients of the fact that an amendment of a record has been made.

§ 297.305 Denial of requests to amend records.

(a) If the Office or agency system manager decides not to amend the record in the manner sought, the requester should be notified in writing of the reasons for the denial.

(b) The decision letter should also include the requester's right to appeal the denial and the procedures for appealing the denial to the appropriate official.

§ 297.306 Appeal of a denial of a request to amend a record.

(a) An individual who disagrees with an initial denial to amend a record may file a written appeal of that denial to the appropriate official. In submitting an appeal, the individual should provide a copy of the original request for amendment, a copy of the initial denial decision, and a statement of the specific reasons why the initial denial is believed to be in error. Any appeal should be submitted to the official designated in the initial decision letter. The appeal should include the words "PRIVACY ACT APPEAL" in capital letters on the envelope and at the top of the letter of appeal.

(b) The reviewing official should complete the review and make a final determination in writing no later than 30 working days from the date on which the appeal is received. When circumstances warrant, this timeframe may be extended.

(c) If the Office grants the appeal, it will take the necessary steps either to amend the record itself or to require the originating agency to amend the record. When appropriate and possible, prior recipients of the record should be notified of the Office's action.

(d) The Office reserves the right to hold in abeyance any Privacy Act appeal concerning a record when an individual is involved in challenging an action involving that record in another administrative, judicial, or quasi-judicial forum. At the conclusion of such a challenge, the individual can resubmit the appeal.

(e) If the Office denies the appeal, it will include in the decision letter notification of the appellant's right to judicial review.

§ 297.307 Statement of disagreement.

(a) Upon receipt of a final administrative determination denying a request to amend a record, the requester may file a concise statement of disagreement. Such a statement should be filed with the appropriate system manager and should include the reasons why the requester believes the decision to be incorrect.

(b) The statement of disagreement should be maintained with the record to be amended and any disclosure of